

ON THE IDENTITY OF *PLECTOPYLIS LEIOPHIS* AND
P. PSEUDOPHIS.

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MR. R. CAIRNS recently sent me three specimens of *Plectopylis* which he was unable to identify. Of their origin he knew nothing beyond the fact that they had been purchased by him at Stevens' Sale Rooms. At first the shells puzzled me somewhat, and I thought they belonged to an undescribed form intermediate between *Plectopylis leiophis* and *P. pseudophis*, for, while having a more depressed spire than the latter, besides being smaller, the parietal vertical lamina was found to be toothed in outline, a feature supposed to be characteristic of *P. pseudophis*. This led me again to examine carefully all the specimens labelled *P. leiophis* in my collection, which had considerably increased in number since first I discussed these structures.¹

Lieut.-Col. Godwin-Austen in figuring and describing *P. pseudophis*² compares it with *P. perareta*, with which he states it forms a close link, and while figuring side by side *P. leiophis* he overlooked the latter's true affinity with his supposed new species, for while *P. perareta* is not only invariably smaller and more flattened, and has more convex whorls and a deeper suture, its parietal armature is quite distinct, the vertical parietal lamina not being united below to the second short fold, and its upper horizontal fold descending at first, then ascending, and finally descending again towards the aperture, while in *P. pseudophis* this fold runs parallel with the suture. On the other hand, the only characters which appeared to separate *P. pseudophis* from *P. leiophis* were the toothed outline of the vertical lamina, the more elevated spire, and the absence of the short fold between the first (upper) long fold and the second shorter one. On examining my other specimens I found, however, that none of these characters is constant, for while some specimens have the elevated spire and the toothed outline of the vertical lamina of *P. pseudophis*, and possess the short fold between the two other folds, stated to characterise *P. leiophis*, others, again, have a depressed spire, although the vertical lamina is toothed in a varying degree, being entire in some. I have already mentioned when discussing *P. leiophis*³ that in a specimen in the collection of the late Dr. W. T. Blanford, and now in the British Museum, the short intermediate fold was absent, and that in an immature specimen in my collection this fold appeared as two short coalesced folds, while the figured⁴ specimen of *P. pseudophis* possesses this fold also. In another specimen,

¹ *Science Gossip*, N.S., vol. iii (1896), p. 154 et seq.

² *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1874, p. 610, pl. lxxv, figs. 3 and 3a.

³ *Op. cit.*, v (1898), p. 16.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, p. 17, fig. 77.

which I received some time ago from Mr. Cairns, this same fold appears again as two coalesced folds, the posterior portion being below the anterior, and it possesses in addition an elongated denticle between the latter and the upper long fold, sharing this feature with an immature shell I received from Miss Linter.

In some specimens the free horizontal fold close to the lower suture and below the vertical lamina soon becomes attenuated, and runs parallel with the suture joining the parietal ridge at the aperture, but in other shells this fold terminates a little in front of the vertical fold. The palatal armature is identical in all the specimens. It appears, therefore, that no constant character differentiates *P. leiophis* and *P. pseudophis*, and the two must therefore be united under one name. The former having been published by Benson in 1860,¹ while the latter was described 14 years later, *P. pseudophis* becomes a synonym, and the shell will therefore have to be known as *P. leiophis*.

I would take this opportunity of pointing out that two names have likewise been applied to another species, i.e., *P. jugatoria*, Ancy, and *P. laminiifera*, Möllendorff. M. Geret, of Paris, who purchased the collection of the late M. Ancy, was obliging enough to allow me to inspect the type of *P. jugatoria*, and upon careful comparison I found that this shell was identical with Möllendorff's *P. laminiifera*. The latter name having been published in the *Nachrichtsblatt der Deutsch. Malak. Ges.* for November and December, 1885, while Ancy's species was described in *Bull. Soc. Malac. France*, vol. ii, No. 1, p. 127, dated July, 1885, the former name becomes a synonym, and the species will have to be known as *P. jugatoria*. To put the question of priority beyond doubt, I endeavoured to find out the actual date of publication of the French journal, and owing to Mr. Smith's usual kindness, I was able to see that the copy of it at the British Museum had been received there on October 20th, 1885.

¹ Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. III, vol. v (1860), p. 246.